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## EDITOR'S MISCELLANY



### PRACTICAL EUGENICS

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Indianapolis

*(Continued from page 453)*

I REMEMBER hearing in boyhood a lecture upon education in which the speaker eloquently contended that universal education would improve the race, would decrease crime and increase morality. No one controverted him, and I think all present accepted the dictum in full. But what havoc has been made of this theory by experience. Then we did not know that acquired characters were not transmitted, and in our darkness believed education would prove a cure-all for the ills of society. Now we know that natural characters only, the good and bad, are transmitted, and that education and training, no matter how extensive and thorough, have not the least effect upon germplasm to modify its power to transmit other than innate characters.

I was at Asheville one time and visited Vanderbilt's farm. On that farm they produce all kinds of high grade stock. They do it by practical breeding. When I got to the dog kennels there were a number of beautiful collies that seemed to be able to understand everything that was said to them. They came up and looked at me and I turned to the man in charge and asked him if they ever had any vicious animals, and he answered, "Do you suppose we are so foolish as to breed from vicious stock? A vicious dog is a defective dog." We have not yet arrived at the point where we have the "gumption" not to have defectives. Defectives ought not to exist. Their existence is a reproach to us. We have not come to that higher intelligence that should control the peopling of the world.

What is it to be practical? In public health work I have been told that this or that man is not practical, and that this or that thing is not practical. When you ask these critics what it is to be practical, they do not know. In reading, I ran across a story where Tyndall told what it is, and that was his story: "I will illustrate to you what I think is meant by being practical. Volta invented the Voltaic battery. Now," he said, "I have read and learned that Volta was an odd man; he did not take care of his family. He was all the time making experiments,

and experimented a great deal in metals. One time he had gone off into the woods, and he came back with some frogs. While he was at the sink, dressing them, he noticed that when they touched a projecting nail which was driven through the zinc they jerked. He knew there must be a cause, and so he figured it out very speedily that it was an electric current. From this was born the Voltaic battery. We all know its usefulness and the practical benefits derived from it. Now," says Tyndall, "I can imagine some unthinking person asking, 'But what are its practical uses?' and Volta would have but one answer to give, and that would be, 'It is enough for me to have discovered this great truth of Almighty God.' And if man has the gumption" (that was the word Tyndall used) "to apply it, then it is practical, otherwise it is not." So this is what it is,—to be practical.

When we would take this great science of eugenics and practically apply it, put it into use, we have to fight against the false sense of modesty that prevails, for it is not true modesty that prevents us from talking about and doing the most important matters in the world. When we analyze it, it is found to be simply prudery, and it cannot be anything else. It has recently been said that hygiene, which surely includes eugenics, can prevent more crime than any law, and it is true. It knows how, and if we have the "gumption" to practically apply eugenics, we can do much toward preventing crime; but there is no amount of moral teaching or general education that will stop it. I told you about a young man who acquired a good education and broke down immediately after his graduation from college, and was sent to an insane asylum. What was the use of bearing the expense of educating that young man? He cost the state of Indiana \$3,000. He cost his parents a great deal of money. In college, and all through life, he had done strange acts—one time he tried to set fire to a house—and still he could take an education, and did, and stood well in his classes. Yet the stigma was in him and sticking out all the time, and he should never have been born. Defective people curse the day they were born, and this man cursed his parents. Almost every man you find with an hereditary infirmity curses the day of his birth. I thoroughly believe that nine out of ten of those who have inherited infirmities would rather be dead than alive.

I have one more story to tell. Go with me in imagination to a certain orphan asylum in Indiana. I went there with skilled assistants to examine all of the inmates. This story is in regard to four of them. We found there two girls and two boys who were all under twelve years of age and all of the same parentage; they all had hereditary

syphilis and were a miserable lot. The attending physician was trying with medicine to suppress the horrible disease. The children all bore the marks of feeble-mindedness. In our Christian charity and patience, we are conserving these deviates. The state will bring those children on to maturity, to adult life and what will happen? They are already feeble-minded, they will land in an insane asylum, a school for feeble-minded, or a prison. Worse than that, they will probably send their kind down the line and so society must build more insane asylums, more idiot asylums, and more prisons. At this period these deviates should be sterilized. It is a simple process. They are unfit to be parents, and if they do have children, the latter will curse the day they were born. And so it is not humanity, it is not Christianity, it is not good government to permit these children to become parents. How in the world could they be the progenitors of healthy children? Their father and mother were both imbeciles, and both reeking with this horrible disease. They lived in a shanty with a dirt floor, not being capable of rising above such a place. They were the parents of eleven children, five of whom survived and six died. Nature tried to get them out of the way, but Indiana is doing all she can to save them. Under the present government, that couple was allowed to steal for a livelihood and to produce more like them. These four children were found, and the truant officer tried to force them into school, but it was discovered they were feeble-minded, and diseased, and so the commissioners, at the expense of the tax payers, got an orphan asylum to accept these children—to preserve them to reproduce their kind. I cannot discover the humanity in it. It is not human, it is inhuman to do that; it is not good Christianity; it is not good science or good government; it is not being practical.

We recognize two ways already quoted from Galton, differing widely from each other, in which race improvement may take place. The first is the biological progress of evolution which from generation to generation brings changes into the intrinsic character of men. The second is social progress, which is to a large degree independent of individuals and is a change in what men "have, know, and do." Little intrinsic gain is observable by comparing the highest and best tribal stocks of the present day with those of two or even three thousand years ago, but we are astounded when we observe the social gain. Civilization, in the sense of increase in the bounties of life and in scientific knowledge, goes onward by leaps and bounds, and this is to be expected when we observe the marked power of man to acquire, and to pass onward what he acquires. However, in comparing our statesmen, philosophers, and artists

with those of ancient Greece and Rome, we observe no marked advancement except perhaps in practical altruism. In biological evolution, heredity constantly interferes on the side opposed to change. Eugenics involves the question: Is it possible to secure to the generations unborn an innate physical, moral, and mental nature, superior to preceding generations? This question is to be answered through the study of the life factors controlling not animal evolution only, but human evolution. For, while physical evolution of the lower animals is easily controlled by breeding, and their mental evolution to very slight degree, their moral development cannot be affected, as they have no moral sense. Although the laws of heredity are chiefly dealt with by eugenics, it must consider also problems of environment and nurture. Artificial selection and surgery cannot alone solve the problem. We must endeavor therefore to bring into harmony biological and social evolution, the two great methods of progress; selecting the helpful ways of both, carefully eliminating those which hinder.

That eugenists for practical results must co-operate with workers for social and institutional progress, plainly appears from the following utterances of Francis Galton. He says: "Eugenic belief extends the function of philanthropy to future generations. It renders its actions more prevailing than heretofore by dealing with families and societies in their entirety, and it enforces the importance of the marriage covenant by directing serious attention to the probable quality of future offspring. It strongly forbids all forms of sentimental charity that are harmful to the race, while it greatly seeks opportunity for acts of personal kindness as some equivalent to the loss of what it forbids. It brings the tie of kinship into prominence and strongly encourages love in family and race. In brief, eugenics is a virile creed, full of hope, and appealing to many of the noblest feelings of our nature."

To practically apply eugenics is but a step forward. Man early utilized the forces of heredity in the culture of plants and animals, and his achievements in this direction, from the prehistoric domestication of animals to the great successes of our modern breeders, have been amazing. From Plato onward, various projects for the deliberate improvement of the human stock have been proposed, but we have not yet arrived. And, now that the way is quite clear, we hesitate, though acknowledging that the ways of the costly and ponderous courts only restrain crime, not in the least curing it. We cannot rationally hope at the present time that extensive breeding from the best will improve human stock to any appreciable degree. Superior women cannot be made the ancestresses of the race, for superior women are not existent

in large numbers, and at the best a mother can bear and do justice to but few children. And again it would be impossible to resort to some polygamous device in order to utilize fully the men of best type as fathers. We, therefore, at least for the present, are limited to prevention of breeding from the worst. To this proposition the popular consent is given for certain classes, such as rapists, and to a degree for confirmed criminals; but, when proposed for eliminating the hereditary insane, and idiot, the hereditary pauper and hereditary vicious and deformed, popular consent will be hard to gain. But it will come with understanding. We, therefore, reach solid and practical ground, when we consider the prevention of breeding from the very worst. A definite beginning of such prevention was first begun in Indiana ten years ago without law, and, most strange to say, by the consent of the unfit persons themselves.

In 1905 a law was passed making sterilization legal under certain circumstances despite the criminal's opposition. This law is short and reads as follows:

WHEREAS, Heredity plays a most important part in the transmission of crime, idiocy, and imbecility;

*Therefore,* Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Indiana, that on and after the passage of this act it shall be compulsory for each and every institution in the state entrusted with the care of confirmed criminals, idiots, rapists and imbeciles, to appoint upon its staff, in addition to the regular institutional physician, two (2) skilled surgeons of recognized ability, whose duty it shall be, in conjunction with the chief physician of the institution, to examine the mental and physical condition of such inmates as are recommended by the institutional physician and board of managers. If, in the judgment of this committee of experts and the board of managers, procreation is inadvisable, and there is no probability of improvement of the mental condition of the inmate, it shall be lawful for the surgeons to perform such operation for the prevention of procreation as shall be decided safest and most effective. But this operation shall not be performed except in cases that have been pronounced unimprovable.

Vasectomy is the method usually chosen for sterilizing, yet it will be observed any method, even castration, is permitted in the law. Vasectomy is simple, scarcely more serious than vaccination, is without the slightest danger, is not attended with mutilation, and may be performed in three minutes without a general anæsthetic. The patient spends not one minute in bed, but immediately goes about his duties. Since October 1899, when Dr. H. C. Sharp, surgeon of the Indiana Reformatory at Jeffersonville, performed his first vasectomy, over seven hundred such operations have been done. Prior to the going into effect of the law all the patients submitted voluntarily. This submission is

usually coincident with the arrival of the religious stage in the prisoner's life. At the time of incarceration most prisoners are inclined to resist prison discipline and are bitter against society. Within a longer or shorter period they generally reach the religious stage and are then more easily managed. They are no longer gloomily taciturn and set against the world, but are frequently eagerly receptive of instruction and very amenable to discipline, but backsliding from this state of mind is sure to occur sooner or later. They are told that parenthood only will be denied them and that their mental and nervous condition, usually disturbed, will greatly improve, after vasectomy. They almost always assent; they do not want to be parents, even crying out against it, and welcome sterility. Within a few months a marked difference occurs in the general attitude and appearance of the man. He sleeps better, he increases in weight, is more cheerful, the mind is brighter, he willingly obeys the rules, the tone and general well being are improved, and in all ways a better man appears. Of course, degeneracy is not cured in the individual by vasectomy, its perpetuation only is prevented. I know a man who was born with two thumbs on each hand. This defect was hereditary, for one uncle and his great-grandmother had it. At twenty years of age he had the extra members amputated, being driven to it through anguish and mortification. When told he would likely transmit the deformity if he became a parent, he thereupon vowed celibacy. In private he told me he would rather die than be the father of a child with even the slightest defect. At a certain college in Indiana I met a young man of twenty-two who had a club-foot and whose education had been delayed by poverty. He was very serious in his manner, at times melancholy, but of bright mind and easily led his class. He confessed to me that he had several times contemplated suicide because of his deformity. "No whole person can know," said he, "the mental torture suffered by those who are deformed. I have gone to the cellar, the attic, and the barn, and cried by the hour over my misfortune. I have cursed my parents for bringing me into the world and have sworn never to marry." His distress of mind and suffering were very considerable. I learned he had shown some attentions to a young woman who had not repelled him, but he had suddenly dropped her and the matter was a subject of remark among his school-fellows. I made inquiries, and after a short acquaintance resolved to tell him he could have a home and no fear of perpetuating his deformity. He accepted, and now he has a home with its increase of happiness in his life. The woman of his choice fully understood he could not be a father. He and his wife are content, and both bless the good which science brings to mankind.

Indiana's other eugenic law was passed in 1905, and commands that—

No license to marry shall be issued except upon written and verified application. Such application shall contain a statement of the full Christian and surname, color, occupation, birthplace, residence, and ages of the parties, whether the marriage contemplated is the first, second or other marriage, together with the full Christian surnames, residence, color, occupation and birthplace of their parents, including the maiden name of the mother, together with such other facts as may be necessary to determine whether any legal impediment to the proposed marriage exists. Applications for license to marry shall be uniform throughout the state and it is hereby made the duty of the state board of health to furnish a form thereof to the several clerks at once upon approval of this act; *Provided*, That said state board of health may revise said forms so furnished from time to time as may be advisable.

The law further commands:

No license to marry shall be issued where either of the contracting parties is an imbecile, epileptic, of unsound mind, or under guardianship as a person of unsound mind, nor to any male person who is or has been within five years an inmate of any county asylum or home for indigent persons, unless it satisfactorily appears that the cause of such condition has been removed and that such male applicant is able to support a family and likely to so continue, nor shall any license issue when either of the contracting parties is afflicted with a transmissible disease, or at the time of making application is under the influence of an intoxicating liquor or narcotic drug.

In those cases when the right to a license is not made to appear the clerk shall refuse to issue the same. At once upon such refusal he shall certify the proceeding to the circuit court without formality or expense to the applicants, who shall be notified by him of such action. Such applications shall thereupon be at the earliest practicable time heard by the circuit judge without a jury in court or in chambers during the term or in vacation as the case may be, and his finding that a license ought to issue or ought not to issue shall be final and the clerk shall act in accordance therewith, the true intent of this section being to secure for the applicants a hearing by said judge without affirmative action by said applicants, and to give notice to them of such hearing, its time and place, without delay or expense.

If persons resident of this state with intent to evade the provisions of Section 1 and Section 3 go into another state and there have their marriage solemnized with the intention of afterward returning and residing in this state, and do so return and reside in this state, such marriage shall be void, and such parties upon returning to this state shall be subjected to all the penalties provided for in this act: *Provided*, This section shall not apply to persons who in good faith become or are citizens of any other state.

Whoever procures the issuance of a license to marry by any false statement, representation, or pretence shall be fined in any sum not exceeding five hundred dollars.



Whosoever, being duly authorized to solemnize marriage in this state, knowingly joins in marriage persons who have not complied with the statute relative to the procurement of marriage license, shall be fined in any sum not exceeding five hundred dollars.

Every clerk of the circuit court who shall issue any license contrary to the provisions of this act shall be fined in any sum not less than twenty-five dollars nor more than one hundred dollars.

At first there was manifest some opposition, and in instances very harsh statements were made, but finally this all died out, and now not the slightest opposition appears. The highest court has upheld the law in the case of a very rich and prominent man who was luetic and knew it, who was refused a license to marry. He thereupon went to Kentucky and was married in defiance of the law, and upon return to Indiana, in due time, the marriage was declared null and void. So, if citizens of Indiana with certain hereditary diseases get married in other states to avoid Indiana's statute, they must remain out of the state or suffer the penalty.

As the enforcement of the law depends upon the county clerks, all new ones are sent a special letter from the State Board of Health which gives the argument for the law, and makes plain the benefits its rigid enforcement will bring to the state. Of course, this is to educate and to arouse the interest of new officials. We have not sufficient data for conclusions, but it is true licenses to marry are denied daily in the state to those who should not marry; and although marriage is not necessary for procreation, still it must be said that the law has done something toward the end at which it is aimed.

As to the sterilization law. It is plain it is not perfect, that it can be severely criticised, but it is a start in the line of a work which must be done, and it has certainly made procreation impossible in scores of persons who were unfit to have progeny.

There are some who object to vasectomy because they surmise by removing fear of consequences in the form of maternity would prove a direct incitation to sexual debauch. This fear proceeds from an obstructive or possibly a retrogressive mind, not from a conservative one; for experience shows that men sterilized by vasectomy enjoy better mental and better physical health. Their minds no longer unceasingly dwell upon sexual matters and they are more continent. Their thoughts are of a higher character and cheerfulness and tractability appear where both were at first absent. Of course, there will be exceptions; but we must be guided by averages.

If vasectomy actually lessens excessive passion and libidinous ten-

dency, or is followed with greater will power to control—then why expect or fear the possibility of a tendency to sexual debauch? Even those who fear this will probably not extend that fear to cover more than a small percentage of cases. For my part, I am convinced this is a man of straw.

Of course, the legal aspect must be settled by judges. If settled right, it will stay settled; otherwise, like the brook, it will go on forever. To most minds it appears that society has a right to protect itself. It fines, it imprisons, and it hangs offenders. All forms of punishment are more or less objectionable, but as we now conduct our affairs they must exist. Why, then, put a legal taboo upon a simple, painless, surgical operation, which is not imposed as a punishment, but is intended to relieve both the individual and society and which is certainly a natural method? How is it possible for a surgeon to damage a man or be other than a benefactor to society, when he betters the man's physical and moral health and humanely prevents him from producing more defectives? Defectives curse the day they were born and declare against being parents, and they also declare against and curse society. It seems to me it is the greatest and noblest charity, sympathy, and love to prevent the production of the unfit; and I believe it is uncharitable, cruel, and unjust to permit their procreation and then devise degrees of punishment for the offences they are certain to commit. A high legal authority says: "The sole function of government is to secure peace and justice." Vasectomy and oophorectomy will strongly tend to secure both of these consummations so devoutly to be wished.

#### PRUDERY

Prudery stands in the way of improving the human race by the natural, kindly and just method of vasectomy. It also stands in the way of preventing those twin leprosies, syphilis and gonorrhœa. Permit me, therefore, to consider some phases of prudery in about the words of the Indianapolis *Sun*.

Prudery is not a virtue. On the contrary, it has many characters of a vice. It is to virtue as a flowerless weed is to a rose. Prudery, if skilfully trimmed, guarded and protected, may be cultivated into a near flower, but it is perilously likely to make of the body and mind a wilderness instead of a garden.

But what a hold prudery has upon us! Were it not for prudery, that most important of all problems in social and economic science, the sex problem, would now be in a fair way of solution. Procreation is the

chief end of man, it is his immortality; through it we may best glorify God and enjoy him forever. But, says prudery, we must not teach our children about this part of their lives because it is indelicate and impure. But this is untrue. So our children are permitted to learn about it, not truly in honest self-respect and dignity and honor, but in secrecy, error and vulgarity. Prudery may justly be blamed with a not inconsiderable proportion of the syphilis and gonorrhœa which so seriously poisons the race physically and morally.

“God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them.” Yet the attitude of the Christian world is such as to warrant the conclusion that it thinks there was something indefensible in the creation of sex and the methods chosen for the perpetuation of the race.

How passing strange are many of our acts? We organize society, we institute governments, we establish schools and churches, we build prisons, almshouses, jails, insane hospitals and idiot asylums, all for the purpose of training, directing, protecting and controlling ourselves. We declare against the evils of alcohol and drugs, we pass pure food laws, we establish a system whereby we may know if we are receiving honest weight and measure. We organize societies to take care of the unfortunate; we enact laws prohibiting and preventing the violations of physical sanctity; but when it comes to the core of the question, the prevention of the causes of these evils and misfortunes, we are restrained from wise and practical action by prudery. Parents, teachers, ministers and physicians, all of whom at some time during the development of the human body are morally responsible for it, shun the question as though it were leprosy. The situation is really disgusting, and it would be well to appoint a government commission or a research committee to try and discover—when, how, by what means, and through whom did this disgusting thing called prudery get such a hold upon us.

It was a welcome sign, a healthful sign, physically and morally, when a ministerial association at Richmond, Indiana, in 1910 recognized the importance of fighting syphilis and gonorrhœa and of preventing the procreation of defectives and favored by resolutions the seeking of some practical means of lessening the awful price this nation is paying for its false modesty. That association suggested the issuance of a certificate of health to persons wishing to enter the marital state be made the compulsory antecedent to marriage. Why not? If God created man in His own image, is it not the duty of the church to keep that creation as free from pollution as possible? Are we to think less of human beings than we do of our live stock, to protect the pure strain of

which we have laws, written and unwritten, laws based upon medical science?

We are entering an era of conservation of natural resources—minerals, wood, water, soil; we are fighting for laws to stop the spoliation of these material things, to prevent their waste and mutilation, to stop excesses in their use, which amounts to abuse. We do this not for ourselves, but for posterity. What are we doing for posterity in the protection of human blood and of human health? We are permitting thousands, tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of human beings to marry and reproduce their own kind, when at the time of their marriage they are deviates or they are afflicted with syphilis or with gonorrhœa or possibly with both, which diseases will not only cause death, but will visit themselves unto the third and fourth generations in the forms of blindness, bone disease, insanity, imbecility, nervous wrecks, all varieties of tuberculosis, moral degenerates and perverts. We are doing this because we will not stop it, not because we cannot. 'Tis puling, pursy prudery which prevents. We are filling our almshouses, hospitals, jails, penitentiaries and homes for the morally and physically unfortunate by our refusal to meet the social question, the sex problem, the prevention of the procreation of degenerates, in an honest, sensible, pure-minded manner. The medical fraternity knows the horrible price modern society is paying for this prudery. Their hospital records and the records of their private practice, were they made public, would be the blow that would stagger humanity.

Would it not be worth something to this nation in dollars and cents to raise men and women who are physically and mentally sound? Does not the future and the perpetuity of our nation, politically and commercially, depend upon a generation that is clean-minded and clear-headed, possessed of brain, brawn and nerve that are free from taint and weakness?

The burden of degeneracy, defectiveness, syphilis and gonorrhœa may in great degree be lifted by a united effort to keep hell out of men rather than trying to keep men out of hell. We must away with prudery. We must sterilize all lily livered loons who would prate of an individual right to perpetuate defectiveness and spread horrible diseases which bring pain, sorrow, agony, torture, and anguish to the tender and innocent, and which may destroy the race.

Children should be taught the truth by competent, high-minded teachers. Separate classes should be held in our schools and colleges, where the sex problems, social evils, and the prevention of the production of the unfit should be discussed as frankly as any other problem

dealing with life. "Know thyself" is an old command. Shall we hold our children in ignorance of those matters which most concern their well-being? Prudery says, "Yes." This alone is proof that prudery is at heart almost a vice.

Stricter laws should be passed regarding medical quacks and the horrible patent medicine concerns that prey upon human ignorance and more often than otherwise encourage these evils in order to make money. Medicine has a great responsibility in these matters. Physicians have it as a duty to inform their patients with these facts and assist parents in imparting information. Ministers of the gospel should be able to find sufficient texts and precedents in the Bible to justify them in thundering from the pulpit righteous denunciation of these evils. A minister who is too nice to do this is not nice enough to follow the footsteps of his Master. And, finally, the marriage laws should be strengthened. Such laws would not bring the millennium, they will not stop all misery, but they will stop some of it.

In conclusion, I wish to say prudery must be eliminated in dealing with this most serious problem of the human race. The American nation is growing in strength, and there is reason to believe before another decade passes the campaign in behalf of physical and moral purity will have come into its own, recognized as safe and sane by the home, the school, the church, society, and the state.